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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2720

June 30, 1995

MORE HELP FOR WEATHER WEARY FARMERS -- A few more changes in farm programs should help producers in areas where wet weather has caused delays in planting. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced the changes which included waiving a cover crop requirement on weather affected acreage in the Acreage Conservation Reserve. Variances in conservation plans for highly erodible land will be granted if bad weather prevented farmers from meeting plan requirements. Crop insurance has also been streamlined to determine prevented-planting losses. Insurance providers will now pay prevented-planting losses on acres designated by producers, rather than using the complex calculation previously established. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

OPEN FIELDS FOR HAYING AND GRAZING -- In counties where weather has caused feed shortages, emergency haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acreage will be allowed. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman made the announcement, saying rules for emergency haying and grazing are there to help livestock producers through a critical situation while preserving wildlife habitats. Qualifying producers are those living in counties determined to have suffered a 40 percent loss in hay and pasture production, where precipitation levels are above 140 percent (or below 40 percent) of normal and have been approved for early release from the program. Producers must decide whether they will hay or graze the land, but are not allowed to do both. Grazing can begin immediately upon approval, but haying must wait until July 15, 1995. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (301) 720-8206.**

JOINT COMMISSION ISSUES REPORT -- "This report is unique in that it takes a forward-looking, long term approach to move both countries away from the immediate trade disputes," said Jim Miller, the co-chair of the Canada-U.S. Joint Commission on Grains. Following an early June meeting, the Commission released a report including short and long-term initiatives. One recommendation is to establish an industry-led committee to monitor ongoing trade and provide suggestions on preventing or managing short-term cross-border issues. Long-term suggestions include eliminating the Export Enhancement Program for cereals and placing the Canadian Wheat Board more at risk of profit or loss in the marketplace. The Commission of five Americans and five Canadians will make final recommendations to both governments in September. **Contact: Wayne Baggett (202) 720-2032.**

OPTING OUT OF THE CRP -- More than half a million acres have been approved for early removal from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Producers had the chance to ask for release from terms and conditions of their CRP contracts, and early figures indicate 651,342 acres have been approved. Not all acreage in the CRP was eligible for the early departure. Among acreage excluded from early release are existing CRP acres functioning as filterstrips, waterways and some timber establishments. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

CHANGES FOR THE F-O-R -- Rapidly shifting market conditions have prompted a change in the Farmer-Owned Reserve (FOR). USDA will require producers to repay 1994-crop feed grain FOR loans and the FOR will be closed to entry of 1994-crop feed grains pledged as collateral for nine-month price support loans. For those producers who had already stated their intentions to enter the FOR and those already enrolled, a four-month loan extension will be granted. Grain in the FOR is affected when grain supplies are required to meet domestic or international needs. Market conditions have changed a lot since feed grains were allowed into the reserve. For example, corn supply and demand have tightened significantly, one of the reasons for the change. Producers needing to repay their FOR loans will be notified by their Farm Service Agency Office. Also, storage payments have stopped for corn and oats pledged as collateral on FOR loans. This will continue until prices have been below the stop-storage-payment level for more than 90 consecutive days. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

A BETTER WAY TO PUT OUT FIRES -- Finding a better way to put out fires was the goal of a team of fire management experts from the Interior and Agriculture Departments. Following one of the most intense wildland fire seasons since the early 1900's, the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior formed a group to look at current federal fire policies and come up with suggestions for improvement. The committee has done that and is now asking for public input. Recommendations include a uniform policy for all agencies dealing with fire, an emphasis on accountability for fire management and interagency cooperation. One of the co-chairs of the team, Dr. Charles Philpot of USDA's Forest Service says, "The foundation for managing wildland fires is safety for the public and firefighters." For a copy of the report, call the Bureau of Land Management in Boise, Idaho at (208) 387-5150 or (208) 387-5457. Comments on the proposed fire management strategies must be received by July 24, 1995 to be included in the analysis. **Contact: Janet Sledge (202) 720-2065.**

AWARD WINNING USDA SCIENTISTS -- A insect and soil helped a chemist and two engineers win top technology transfer awards from USDA. Chemist James Oliver invented a way to test the effectiveness of a chemical attractant used to trap gypsy moths. A simple and much less expensive lab test could help federal and state agencies make sure the attractant has the right chemical composition to make it effective. That would replace a time-consuming and expensive field test. The engineering team of George Foster and Kenneth Renard won for their work to develop an updated system for measuring soil erosion and runoff. All three scientists work for USDA's Agricultural Research Service and will receive the 1995 Technology Transfer Awards this fall. **Contact: Sean Adams (301) 344-2723.**

1995 FARM PROGRAM ENROLLMENT -- Just over 167 million acres are slated to be in USDA programs this year. Crops covered by the 1995 farm programs include wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, cotton and rice. Corn producers taking part in the 1995 programs agreed to reduce their plantings by at least 7.5 percent from established crop acreage bases. Extra-long-staple cotton producers agreed to reduce plantings by 10 percent, while participating rice producers agreed to a 5 percent reduction. Reductions were not required for wheat, sorghum, barley, oats and upland cotton producers. Those taking part in 1995 farm programs must purchase crop insurance to qualify for USDA program benefits. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1987 -- New products for your home, your automobile and even your grill are coming to soon to a store near you, thanks to American farmers. In this edition of Agriculture USA, Gary Crawford looks at a special product development program that is making new uses for farm crops blossom. (Weekly cassette -- 5 minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME # 1466 -- The other white meat. Meat bargains this summer. Beneficial bugs. One set of fire guidelines. New meat inspection process put on hold by Congress. (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1979 -- Rice market continues to be hot. A report from the U.S./Canadian Grains Commission. Cleaning up manure spills. More changes for crop insurance. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman discusses trade outlook for Russia. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Monday, July 3, world horticultural trade and U.S. export opportunities; poultry slaughter. Tuesday, July 4, HOLIDAY. Wednesday, July 5, weekly weather and crops. Friday, July 7, dairy products; annual noncitrus fruits and nuts. Tuesday, July 11, world agricultural supply and demand for cotton; weekly weather and crops. Wednesday, July 12, world agricultural supply and demand; cotton and wool outlook; cotton world markets and trade; Thursday, July 13, feed outlook; oil crops outlook; rice outlook; wheat outlook; hog outlook; world agricultural production; grain world markets and trade; oilseeds world market and trade; tobacco world markets and trade. Friday, July 14, agricultural prices; milk production. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359. COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545
Material changed at 5 p.m., ET, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

ACTUALITIES -- Ken Ackerman, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, talks about additional crop insurance adjustments to help weather challenged farmers. Bob Stephenson, Farm Service Agency, talks about emergency haying and grazing to help producers affected by adverse weather. Mike Taylor, Administrator of Food Safety and Inspection Service, says administration is disappointed by House Committee ruling which could delay new meat and poultry inspection.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

Thursday, 3:45 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. ET, Telstar 302, Channel 6 (Transponder 3H), (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3820 MHz. Monday, 11:00-11:30 a.m. ET, Galaxy 4, Channel 12 (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3940 MHz.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.
Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

NEW FARM DIRECTOR...for WCUB, Manitowoc, WI as of June 12 is **Lauri Struve** who had been serving as news and part-time farm director at KGRA in Jefferson, Iowa. A native Iowan, Lauri has been in broadcasting eight years and graduated from Wayne State College in Wayne, NE with a broadcast communications degree. In her new role, she broadcasts about 10 minutes of news and 10 minutes of farm markets throughout the day.

FARMERS ARE FEELING GOOD...about crops, but they're not as happy with livestock prices, reports **John Everly** (KDTH, Dubuque, IA). Plentiful May rainfall has helped crops, but late planting means crop development is behind. Although hog prices have improved, some farmers are selling hog herds to concentrate fully on crop production. John says he checks our radio newsline daily for breaking news. (Our number is **202-488-8358**.)

27 YEARS ON-THE-AIR...is the milestone **Roger Flemmer** (KFAB, Omaha, NE) will reach in September -- 14 of those years, he's been their farm broadcaster. Roger hits the air shortly after 5 a.m. daily with periodic reports from 5-6 a.m., hourly reports till mid-morning and four reports during the noon hour. From too wet to too hot, Roger says irrigation systems were back in use on some cornfields last week. Corn, soybeans and sorghum are planted, and winter wheat is developing well, but late. Wheat harvest there is still three weeks away.

SEED IMPROVEMENT...for navy beans and sugarbeets is being achieved in Michigan by using certified seed from Idaho. **Terry Henne** (WSGW, Saginaw, MI) is planning a five-day August trip to see where the seed is grown and develop features for his local farmers. Local seed was found unreliable, and outside sources are being used to re-establish quality sources for planting seed. Other crops are beginning to show some heat stress because of a 3-4 inch moisture deficit. Terry will mark his 25th year at WSGW next year and his 20th of farm broadcasting there. Michigan's cherry growing region is preparing for its annual festival during Fourth of July week.



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